

WITH THE FARMERS

By Prof. W. F. MASSEY

Monday, September 15, 1913.



Digging Sweet Potatoes.

"Is there a machine that will dig sweet potatoes successfully? How about the Hoover potato digger?" There are several of these machines that dig Irish potatoes successfully. The Hoover is a good machine for that purpose, but the machine will answer for sweet potatoes, as they will inevitably bruise them. Our large growers use a revolving coupler or disk on a plow beam and run this down between the rows to cut the vines. The potatoes are then turned out with a two-horse plow, the team straddling the rows, and the hands follow and pick and sort the potatoes and leave them lying along the rows to sun a while, and then are barreled in the field if to be shipped, or if to be stored are gathered in crates.

Curing Soy Beans.

"Please tell me how to cure the soy bean. If I let them stand till ripe, they pop open and fall out, and if cut earlier they are hard to cure. I would like to grow a good many ripe beans to grind for hogs to take the place of shorts, as they have the high protein content, but for the difficulty in saving them." There is no particular difficulty in curing the soy beans and saving the seed. The time to cut is when the pods are well-filled and barely showing signs of maturity. Then the tall or Mammoth soy can be cut and set up in shocks like corn, and will cure nicely, and in the curing of the hay the beans will ripen all right, and can be threshed out. The dwarf forms can be mown and cured in shocks just as I have told you to cure the cowpeas. Soy beans cure rather more readily than cowpeas. When the hay is cured and dry in the barn there will be no difficulty in threshing the seed out.

Hairy Vetch.

"I want to sow some vetch this fall, and some tell me that it will ruin the land and cannot be destroyed. Would like your advice about it." The hairy vetch is a very good plant, and the chief difficulty is in getting pure seed. Hairy vetch is a very good forage plant, but if you are interested in wheat, I would keep vetch off of the farm, for it will be certain to get in the wheat, and vetch seed is very hard to clean from wheat. The seed is very high priced, and you can buy nearly two bushels of crimson clover seed for the price of one bushel of vetch, and I had rather have the clover than the vetch. Your friends are very near right, for if you once sow vetch it is probable that you will have it every year.

Curing Peas, Etc.

Henrico County: "I am trying to cure peas with strict accordance to your suggestions. Have bought hay caps too. After the first cutting had been turned several times with the tedder it was put in cocks, the second afternoon I found that the cocks were heating, and the hay had wilted, but the stems were full of sap. Will it hurt the hay to heat in the cocks, or should they be opened to air. Other peas I had cut and the cocks were caught in a storm and drenched with rain, and I have had the hay opened and scattered with the tedder. How long should it take the cocks to cure enough to go into the barn. There are good many weeds with stout stems that take a good while to cure. I have used no fertilizer on my farm except acid phosphate, and most of this sprinkled on the manure. I understand that it is cheaper in the long run to use the pulverized phosphate rock, which I am offered at \$5.65 and \$7.60 a ton, the cheaper grade guaranteed 12 to 13 percent phosphorus and the other 13 percent minimum. Which would you buy? Then I am offered Basic slag at \$16.05 delivered. How much of this would I have to use to equal 200 pounds of acid phosphate. Is it cheaper to buy the slag or to depend on the ground rock? I feed everything to stock. There have been no many discussions in the farm papers about the use of lime and slag and ground phosphate rock that it is difficult for a layman to come to a conclusion, and I think that if you could in your columns in The Times-Dispatch write an article on this question, it would be appreciated by all the farmers."

I have tried to quote what is important in your long letter, and will try to reply. I am of the opinion that you are mowing peas rather too green. I never cut till the pods show signs of ripening. The curing depends largely on this. After stirring with the tedder I rake into rather small windrows and turn these the next morning and do not cock till that afternoon. I try to avoid any heating in windrow or cock, as that may cause the leaves to fall in moving. I make the cocks as narrow and tall as will stand. Now how long it will take to cure sufficiently to go to the barn depends not only on the weather, but the conditions of the peas when cut. Once in very hot, dry weather and a crop not over heavy I put the hay in the barn the third evening. But usually it will have to remain in the cocks much longer, and very rank and heavy peas will take a week. But get them in before the leaves get crisp, and once in left the hay alone, and it will cure all right.

Now as to the phosphate rock, there is hardly any difference in the samples, and I would buy the lower-priced article just as soon as the other; there is too much difference in the price for the difference in the quality. I have been watching the discussion about lime and ground limestone and ground phosphate with a good deal of interest. Being now retired from active farm work, I have not had a chance to test the difference between burnt lime and limestone that is simply ground lime. Some of the advocates of the ground lime are rather intolerant of any difference of opinion on the subject, and insist that ground limestone is the only thing that a good farmer should use. Well, I believe that I have had the reputation among those who know me and know my work of being a fairly good farmer, and I have used thousands of bushels of burnt lime with the happiest effect on the land.

When I was young I bought what is called agricultural lime. I soon learned better, after reflecting that this was merely air-slaked refuse of the kilns, and that I had to freight the water it took in the slaking. Then I found that the lime burners would sell their fresh lump lime in bulk for a lower price when a guarantee was given that it was for agricultural purposes. And the railroads made a special rate for agricultural lime. My first carload of lump lime was 440 bushels. It was an excellent article. I had to haul five miles. I piled it near water and slaked it to a powder, and found that I had very nearly 1,000 bushels. Had I bought slaked lime I would have had to freight all that water.

Now this slaked heap, standing a week or two, was not caustic as the rock people claim, and it went twice as far as the ground rock, and this matter of hauling and spreading is a costly thing. For, in freighting the ground rock you are freighting just as much water as in the slaked lime. None of the advocates of ground limestone claim that they can use less than double the amount of the slaked burnt lime. Now, it is also admitted that for the sweetening influence on the soil the burnt lime acts more quickly, and when we take into consideration the extra railroad freight and hauling and the extra labor in spreading, the burnt lime is the cheaper and more quickly acting. But as to the phosphate rock, I am heartily in favor of it, where the land is kept supplied with humus or it is used mixed in stable manure. As I told Dr. Hopkins, of Illinois, at the farmers' convention in Raleigh last summer, when he was advocating the use of the ground rock phosphate, it is a good thing for a good farmer, but a poor thing for a poor one. One great advantage is that it does not rob the soil of lime and make it sour as acid phosphate does. Basic slag is not so readily available as acid phosphate, but it, too, keeps the soil sweet, for it carries forty pounds of free lime in every 100 pounds, and I am inclined to believe that its regular and liberal use will keep the soil sweet and save the cost of liming. But the fact that it carries free lime makes it a bad thing to mix with materials containing nitrogen in organic form. It cannot be mixed with the manure safely, and cannot be used in mixing a complete fertilizer. If cottonseed meal or other forms of organic nitrogen are used, though it may be safely mixed with nitrate of soda. For general purposes on such a farm as yours I would use the pulverized rock in connection with plowing under legume crops and mixing in stable manure. For liming I had rather use 1,000 pounds of freshly-slaked burnt lime than a ton of ground rock, as being cheaper and more efficient. Some of the advocates of ground limestone insist that the burnt lime destroys the humus in the soil. Now the fact is that when we have a lot of organic decay in the soil, the lime helps us to get the use of the nitrogen in the soil. It is the fact that it part to keep up the supply in the soil. They claim that it is lime carbonate that is needed, and the rock is simply carbonate of lime. Well, when we slake a pile of burnt lime and let it stand a week or so, it is lime carbonate, and in a much finer condition than any grinding could put it, and hence far more readily used.

Preparing Clover Seed for Wheat. "On a field of red Piedmont clay I cut the first crop of red clover and turned under the second growth. Now, please tell me what further to do and what fertilizer to use. Also how much seed is best per acre." What is needed now is to keep the land well harrowed and make the soil fine, and the finer you get the surface soil, and the better you pack it down by team and harrow, the better the chance for the wheat crop. You have turned a clover sod. That will give you all the nitrogen needed. Your red soil has an inexhaustible supply of insoluble potash, and the clover turned under will help in its decay to make some of this available. Then, leaves only of the clover and phosphate acid is needed. It will pay you to use fully 400 pounds of the 16 per cent grade of acid phosphate, and I believe, that with the turned-under sod, the same amount of the Basic slag might be better, because of the effect of the lime it carries on the decaying organic matter. But if you cannot get the Basic slag, commonly called Thomas' phosphate, use the acid phosphate and drill it in with the wheat. Sow five pecks of wheat an acre.

Children Cry
FOR FLETCHER'S
CASTORIA

A Word to Business Men

Since I have been editing these two columns for the farmers I have tried especially to put in them just what farmers are wanting to know, and have invited their correspondents. Many of these letters ask me to tell them where to buy certain seeds, implements, fertilizers and live stock. Now, such questions, when I can answer them, involve the writing of a personal letter, for it is not fair to advertisers, who pay for space, that I should advertise in these columns any one firm free of cost. Now, to complete the page, which farmers all over Virginia and the adjoining States are now reading, we should have the advertisements of the houses that deal in the things that farmers want. Many farmers are now interested in home canning of fruits and vegetables, and they write to me to know where best to buy tin cans. They want clover seed, grain and grass seed, and want to know who sells them. They want a certain style of plow or cultivator, a fanning mill, or what not, and want me to tell them where to get them. If the same page that contains my replies to their letters contained the business announcements of the houses that deal in the things they want, the ads will certainly be read, for there are many cutting out this page and preserving it for reference, and if the ads on the page are in the same line, they will keep the ads, too, for reference, and I will have no hesitancy in referring inquirers to houses that offer what they want and are paying for the ads.

I have written personal replies to 2,826 letters from farmers.
W. F. MASSEY.

COST OF LIVING STILL GOING UP

Approximately 60 Per Cent Higher Than Average Between 1890 and 1900.

BACON LEADS IN SOARING

Richmond Among Cities Where Prices of Fourteen Articles of Food Are Investigated.

Washington, D. C., September 14.—The cost of living on June 15 was approximately 60 per cent higher than the average between 1890 and 1900; more than 2 per cent higher than it was a year ago, and nearly 15 per cent higher than it was two years ago.

Investigations of retail prices in forty cities conducted by experts of the Bureau of Labor show prices practically at the same level as last November, when the high records of the last quarter-century were reached. Fourteen articles of food were investigated and compared with the average prices between 1890 and 1900. Every one except sugar showed a marked advance; bacon, which led in the soaring, went up 12.5 per cent.

Other articles which showed remarkable advances were: pork chops, 111 per cent; round steak, 102.5; smoked ham, 84; hams, 76.8; sirloin steak, 76.2; rib roast, 75; lard, 66.5; corn meal, 57.3; potatoes, 44.4; butter, 41.3; eggs, 40.5; milk, 38.4, and flour, 23.9. During the same period sugar showed a decline of 1 per cent.

Prices Still on Rise. During the last year prices of eleven of fifteen articles investigated went up. Bacon advanced 15.2 per cent; smoked ham, 14.1; pork chops, 13.4; hams, 11.8; eggs, 11.7; round steak, 10.1; sirloin steak, 8.8; lard, 7.3; rib roast, 6.8; butter, 6.8, and milk, 4.1. The other four declined as follows: potatoes, 3.9; sugar, 1.6; wheat flour, 7.7, and corn meal, 8.9.

Prices were investigated in Atlanta, Baltimore, Birmingham, Boston, Buffalo, Charleston, S. C., Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Fall River, Mass.; Indianapolis, Jacksonville, Fla.; Kansas City, Mo.; Little Rock, Ark.; Los Angeles, Louisville, Ky.; Memphis, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Newark, N. J.; New Haven, Conn.; New Orleans, New York, Omaha, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Portland, Ore.; Providence, R. I.; Richmond, Va.; St. Louis, St. Paul, Minn.; Salt Lake City, San Francisco, Scranton, Pa.; Seattle, and Washington, D. C.

OFFICERS SPEND DAY IN RICHMOND TRAILING THIEF

(Continued From First Page.)

Savannah last Wednesday, are now under surveillance. All have been closely examined by officials of the company in Richmond, New York and Savannah. Efforts to clear up the mystery are being directed from the Savannah office of the Southern Express Company by General Manager J. B. Hockaday and Thomas J. Watts, chief special agent.

It is not expected that the police of any city will be called upon to act until the special operatives have completed their case and are ready to make an arrest. While the robbery has not been officially brought to the attention of the Richmond Police Department, it is known that detectives are being held on the alert to act at any moment.

Every nation in Europe has awakened to the value of waterplanes which are here called the "eyes of the navy." Most of the countries have appropriated large sums of money for the purchase of the machines wherewith to increase the attacking and defensive powers of their navies.

"Singularly enough, the United States, although it has scarcely any waterplane equipment, originated the only practical apparatus for launching the machines from warships. Captain Washington Irving Chambers, of our navy, has produced the most satisfactory pneumatic catapult, and all the United States needs is a sufficient fleet of flying boats. With an adequate supply of flying boats, as warships could be efficaciously protected against an enemy, owing to the fact that flying boats increase the range of lookout of approximately twenty miles to over 200 miles. It is unnecessary to enlarge upon the advantage which must be possessed by the navy provided with such an extensive range of vision. The enemy's vessels could be located within any radius that the navy men might require."

Regarding the proposed international contests for hydroaeroplanes, Mr. Curtiss mentioned that arrangements were being made for a match next month, but the plans are not yet complete. Sopwith will probably represent England, and French fliers are expected to compete also.

HIGHWAY BOOSTERS ON TOUR.

Will Make Stops at Various Points Between Bristol and Washington. [Special to The Times-Dispatch.] Bristol, Va., September 14.—Carl A. Jones headed a party of highway boosters, who left Bristol to-day in two touring cars for a trip across Virginia in the interest of the proposed Bristol to Washington highway, which is to connect with the Memphis to Bristol stone highway here. The party will make stops at various points, and will spend two or three days in Washington. Mayor George M. Warren is spokesman for the party. The survey for this road has been completed between Bristol and Roanoke, and portions of it are being constructed.



Prime Features of the Answer Book

With But One Copy of the Picture it Permits You to Make Ten Answers to it

It costs you 75 cents, or 80 cents by mail. If you were to submit a full set of 770 answers on coupons the extra cost to you would be \$38.50. The Answer Book gives you the same privilege and saves you \$37.75. If you intend to submit 75 or more extra answers, the Answer Book saves money. You need sign your name and address but once for the whole set of answers. It is small, compact and neat—a most convenient way to submit solutions. It eliminates the possibility of coupons becoming lost about the house. It is of good paper. You can write your answers with pencil or ink. It entitles you to 35 pictures FREE, Nos. 36 to 70.

What the Answer Book Is

The Answer Book is a book of 77 double pages. It is shaped like a stenographer's note book, and opens from the bottom like a note book, not from the side like a story book. The top pages are numbered from 1 to 77 inclusive. Each of the bottom pages has ten spaces ruled off on it.

How to Use the Answer Book

One copy of each of the 77 pictures is pasted by the contestant on the 77 top pages. On the bottom pages, beneath where each picture is pasted, the contestant writes down from one to ten answers. On the top section of page 1, for instance, you paste picture No. 1. On the bottom section you write down the answer or answers you wish to submit to the picture. And so on for ALL the 77 pictures. Bear in mind that the larger number of solutions you submit the better chance you have of striking the 77 correct ones. Answer Books, 75 cents; 80 cents by mail.

One Interested

The title and author's name can both go on the same space. In this way ten answers can be made on the same page.

A four-page pamphlet giving all details of this contest was printed in this newspaper some time ago. If you did not see it, send a 2-cent stamp or call the office.

BEWARE OF FAKERS

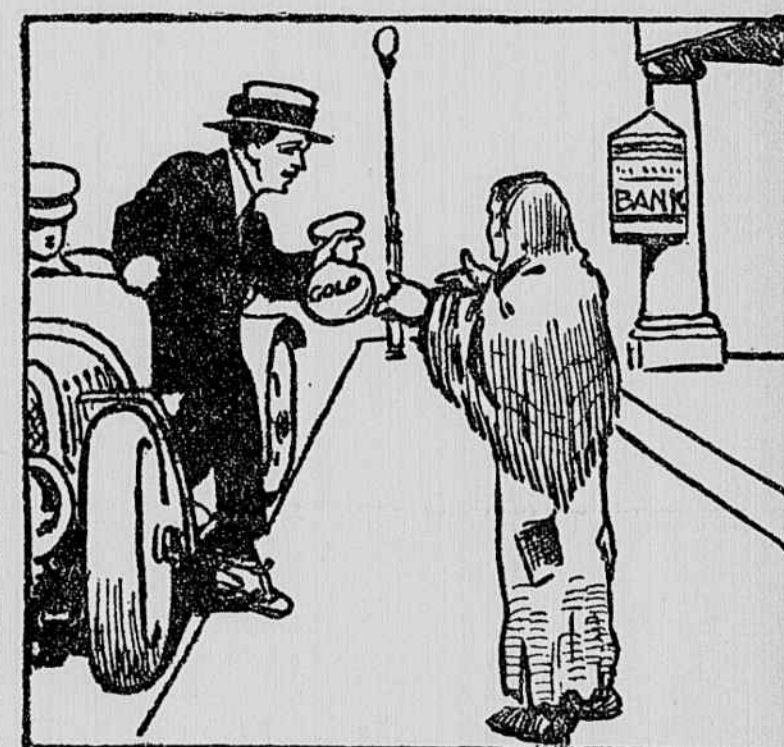
Who Offer to Sell Worthless Lists of Titles—They Cannot Help You.

HOW THEY WORK.

These fakers generally advertise that for a 2-cent stamp they will send several titles, which, in the opinion of the fakers, will prove correct titles to the pictures. Accompanying this "sample" list of titles will be a letter advising that for 50 cents, a dollar, two dollars, or more, they will supply lists of titles that will seem to fit the pictures. Don't deal with these sharpers, because if they could furnish a list of titles that would solve the pictures, they would use their own lists and win the prizes. They know no more about the titles than you do.

The Times-Dispatch's Great \$1200.00 Gold Booklovers' Contest

Picture No. 51 Date, September 15th.



What Book Does This Picture Represent? Write Title and Name of Author in Form Below

Title

Author

Your Name

Street and Number

City or Town

TOTAL NUMBER OF PICTURES, 77. Contest began July 27th. Each day a different picture appears in this space. Cut them out. Save them until the last picture appears on October 11th. Don't send in partial lists. Wait until you have all the answers to the 77. Read Rules, Daily Story and Special Announcements in another part of this paper. It will help you win a prize. Extra pictures and coupons of any date that have appeared may be had at 2c. Enter to-day without registering your name. Merely Save Pictures and Coupons as they appear.

GET AN ANSWER BOOK (It Contains 77 Double Pages) AND 35 PICTURES FREE

You can make ten answers to each picture, yet only need but one copy of each picture.

On the upper page you paste a picture. On the lower section you write from one to ten book titles which you have selected for the picture pasted above.

You save time, labor and expense with an Answer Book, and it helps you to win.

USE THIS ORDER FORM FOR THE ANSWER BOOK.

Booklovers' Contest Editor, The Times-Dispatch, 1913.

Find herewith 80 cents (75 cents at office), for which deliver to me your Answer Book and six certificates, returnable as the pictures appear in the contest for Pictures Nos. 36 to 70.

Name

Street and No.

City State

Do not send stamps or silver. Send check or money order.

The principal features in connection with this contest are copyrighted by the Booklovers' Contest Co., San Francisco, Cal.